

United States Marine Corps

Press Release

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Wargaming conference explores lessons learned from OIF I and II Dec. 08, 2004

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, VA – A conference recently conducted by the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory's Wargaming Division is helping to identify solutions to the complexities of future urban operations.

Emerald Express 05-1 is one of a series of conferences, workshops, and seminars, and a major war game comprising the *Joint Urban Warrior 05* Program. The Joint Urban Warrior program is a multi-year co-sponsored effort between the U. S. Marine Corps and Joint Forces Command, Suffolk, VA, to explore innovative approaches to complex joint and combined urban operations.

The December 8 conference collected the observations and insights from veterans of Operations Iraqi Freedom I and II and highlighted after action briefs from recently returned Marine Corps, Army, and Navy Medical Corps officers. Other participants included representatives from the Air Force, Joint Forces Command, the Joint Staff, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and several Coalition partners.

The group concluded that while the Three Block War model (simultaneous or near-simultaneous conduct of combat, stability and support, and humanitarian operations in the same urban environment) is the appropriate framework for complex urban operations, it is essential that the combat dimension not be diminished relative to Stability and Support Operations. Additionally, training and professional military education programs need to emphasize the appropriate balance among Three Block War

components. To accomplish this, lessons learned from both Iraq and Afghanistan must constantly be incorporated into service training and education programs

Other findings reinforced the view that the most effective human intelligence collection method is with patrolling troops interacting with the population; that Information Operations are fundamental to success and should embrace broad cultural awareness and extensive use of mass media; and that measures of success are invariably “local” and contingent upon the political and social dynamics of distinctive regions, as well as the particular military situation.

The importance of Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield emerged as a key issue during the conference. IPB is much more difficult in complex urban environments given the likelihood of unconventional, highly adaptive foes operating among noncombatants. Moreover, “Cultural Intelligence” is a critical aspect of IPB in this environment. Command and Control at the small unit level also proved particularly challenging in that these units are increasingly conducting tasks (e.g., IPB and information management) normally associated with higher echelon units with much larger staffs.

Finally, medical support to Three Block War operations emerged as a major issue. Improvements recommended included more complete integration of medical units into Marine combat organizations; training corpsmen in basic combat skills and operations; revamping the corpsmen training program to generate “paramedic-level” capabilities; cross training combat arms Marines and soldiers in basic battlefield medical techniques; and the need to refine helicopter medical evacuations on the battlefield, command relationships, and the flow of medical supplies.

Findings from *Emerald Express 05-1* will be widely distributed to participants and interested organizations, and will also feed the greater *Joint Urban Warrior 05* Program by providing real world context to that effort, as well as comprising some of the conclusions and recommendations from the overall program.

Visit www.wargaming.quantico.usmc.mil or www.smallwars.quantico.usmc.mil for additional information regarding this event and the Joint Urban Warrior program in general.